

M o i r a B u r k e
5794 Silveyville Road
Dixon, California 95620

February 24, 2011

Mr. Phil Isenberg, Chair
Delta Stewardship Council
980 Ninth St. Suite 1500
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Isenberg and Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Delta Plan.

As a fourth generation Californian, San Francisco native and Solano County farmer for 45 years, I have had ample occasion to observe the upper Delta from a number of perspectives. Clearly, the First Draft Delta Plan describes some of them as well as many of the roles the Delta plays in our lives. To some degree, they are summarized as being addressed within:

"Coequal goals" means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place.

But, alas, the devil is in the details. A reliable water supply for which part of California, for what purpose, one might ask. When reports are read of so called "farmers", i.e. agribusiness, selling water obtained for farming at unconscionable profits to support ill planned development elsewhere, one wonders just how this meets the test of "coequal". When one reads of alternate potential water sources being ignored in the planning of development on lands otherwise unable to support growth, one questions motivation along with ethics of those involved.

Meanwhile, the First Draft Delta Plan pays little attention to the most assured, as well as probable, effects of diversion of huge quantities of water from the Sacramento River on surrounding agriculture in Sacramento, Yolo and Solano Counties. Clearly, agriculture, as well as terrestrial habitat, along the river will suffer as salinity from seawater moves

upstream. The degree to which such salinity will also contaminate aquifers is not addressed, but certainly a likelihood. Related climatic effects will further impede area agriculture.

It is, however, well documented that the above referenced counties supply highly significant proportions of the world's food: 80 percent of tomatoes, for example. So, here is my point: ***How can any of us possibly afford to risk losing our ability to meet our most basic needs, namely, clean air, potable water and food?***

To damage the magnificent Delta ecosystem is, in my view unconscionable; to damage our ability to meet basic needs seems foolhardy.

Best regards,

Maira Burke